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EPA ANNOUNCES PUBLIC MEETING ON PROPOSED CLEANUP OF PCB "HOT SPOT" AREA IN NEW BEDFORD

BOSTON---The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced a public informational meeting to be held on Thursday, August 3 to discuss EPA's proposal to cleanup a PCB-contaminated "hot spot" at the New Bedford Harbor Superfund site in New Bedford, MA.

At the meeting, EPA will present a recommendation for cleaning up contamination at the "hot spot," and review the other cleanup alternatives that have been evaluated. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Days Inn, Hathaway Road, New Bedford.

In addition, EPA will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, August 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Inn to receive public comments on its proposed cleanup plan.

The "hot spot" is a 5-acre area within the Acushnet River estuary which contains highly contaminated sediments. EPA is proposing to remove approximately 10,000 cubic yards of sediment by dredging, incinerating the sediments in an on-site, mobile treatment facility to destroy the contaminants, and providing temporary storage of the treated sediments in an existing shoreline disposal facility. The stored sediments will be addressed in the next phase of the cleanup. Under the proposed plan, cleanup of the "hot spot" area would take one year and cost approximately \$14.4 million.

The purpose of EPA's meeting is to familiarize the public with the cleanup plan and provide an opportunity to ask questions. Between August 4 and September 1, EPA will accept written comments

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on the proposed plan and other cleanup options evaluated. Oral comments will be accepted at the public hearing. EPA will review and consider all public comments on the plan prior to making a final decision on cleanup for the "hot spot."

The proposed plan and other documents relating to EPA activities at the site are available at the New Bedford Free Library, 613 Pleasant Street, New Bedford, at the Millicent Library, 45 Center Street, Fairhaven, and at the EPA Records Center, 90 Canal Street, Boston, MA.

Sediments in New Bedford Harbor are contaminated primarily with PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) and heavy metals. The areas with the highest levels of contamination are located in the northern end of the Acushnet River estuary.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection are working with EPA to address contamination at the site.

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